Nationally Competitive Scholarships

Leadership, Scholarship, Citizenship

[West Texas A&M University Logo]
What will you do at WT – and Beyond?

• “...I ask you to decide, as Goethe put it, whether you will be an anvil—or a hammer. The question is whether you are to be a hammer—whether you are to give to the world in which you were reared and educated the broadest possible benefits of that education.”

• ATTRIBUTION: Senator JOHN F. KENNEDY, commencement address, Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, June 8, 1958.—Transcript, p. 2.
How do you define the following?

• Leadership:

• Scholarship:

• Citizenship:

• Can you name an individual who embodies your definition of each word?
What are Nationally Competitive Scholarships?

• The “Olympics” of academic scholarships

• Highly prestigious:
  – Alumni include leaders in government, industry and academia

• Extremely competitive:
  – **Rhodes**: 32 selected / 1200 applicants
  – **Marshall**: 40 selected / 1400 applicants
  – **Truman**: 80 selected / 700 applicants
  – **Goldwater**: 300 selected / 1200 applicants
What are Nationally Competitive Scholarships?

• Merit-based:
  – *You don’t need to prove financial need for most programs*

• Recognized and valued across academic, business and government sectors:
  – *Stand out from the crowd*

• A chance to show the world you can make a difference:
  – *You are already a leader*
Why should I apply?

• Demonstrate your abilities as an *exemplary* leader, scholar and citizen;

• Compete against the best students in the United States;

• Tackle a unique challenge;

• Because you are a “change-agent”.
Why should I apply?

• Articulate your personal and professional goals;
• Build the bridge between your past, present and future;
• Expand your knowledge of your field and the world;
• Prepare for graduate school or job searches.
Do you have what it takes?

• An *excellent* academic record;

• Evidence of outstanding leadership roles on campus or in the community;

• In-depth involvement in public and community service;

• A record of innovative research, creative or internship projects.
Do you have what it takes?

• A willingness to critically self-evaluate and articulate your deepest convictions;

• A vision of your personal and professional goals for the next 3-5 years and beyond;

• Determination, commitment and enthusiasm to compete against the best students in the U.S.
How do I prepare?

• Pursue a challenging curriculum:
  – *Add value, not just hours*
  – *Add a second major or a minor*

• Identify faculty mentors:
  – *Volunteer to assist on projects*
  – *Keep them posted about your activities*

• Find leadership roles in extracurricular activities:
  – *Quality, not quantity, counts!*
  – *Connect activities to your coursework*
How do I prepare?

• Think globally through study abroad or learning a new language;

• Actively seek research, internship or service-learning opportunities;

• Cultivate and inform your opinions on major issues and in your field.
Undergraduate programs

- **Goldwater Scholarship**: For sophomores and juniors in mathematics, sciences or engineering related fields.

- **Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship**: For university-based study abroad.

- **Truman Scholarship**: For juniors committed to leadership roles in public service fields.

- **Udall Scholarship**: For sophomores and juniors in environmental studies or Native Americans in tribal policy or tribal health care related fields.
Graduate programs

- **Fulbright Scholarship:** *One year of study, research or English language teaching assistantships conducted overseas.*

- **Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship:** *For graduate or professional school.*

- **Marshall Scholarship:** *Two years of graduate study in the UK or Northern Ireland.*

- **Mitchell Scholarship:** *One year of graduate study in Ireland or Northern Ireland.*

- **Rhodes Scholarship:** *Two to three years of graduate study at Oxford University.*
Parts of an application

• A personal statement or curriculum vitae:
  – *Your self-portrait*

• A project statement, study proposal or policy proposal:
  – *Define your dream project or issue of concern*

• Multiple letters of recommendation:
  – *Support your application materials*
  – *Articulate other facets of your character and record*
The personal statement

• Creates an *authentic* and *persuasive* self-portrait.

• Defines your personal ethic.

• Explains who you are and how you became this way.

• Shows how you embody the values of the fellowship program.

• Invites the reader to know you.
The Personal Statement: Points to Ponder

• What errors or regrets have taught you something important about yourself?

• What ideas, books, theories, classes or movements have had a profound impact on you?

• To what extent do your current commitments reflect your most strongly held values?

• Can you identify a “common thread” through your academic work and extracurricular activities?

(Partially derived from: From a Faculty Representative: The Truman and Marshall Scholarship Processes as Educational Experiences, by Cheryl Foster, Ph. D.; University of Rhode Island)
The project statement or proposal

• What are you going to do?
• Why does it need to be done?
• Why should we think you can do it?
• How are you going to do it?
• Where have you gone for other information?
• Is the project feasible?
• How does it relate to your future interests?
• And so on…
The policy proposal or analysis

• The memo to a policy maker:
  
  *You write as the advocate for the position.*

• The policy analysis:
  
  *Advocate, describe or predict the impact of the policy.*
  
  *Analyze a speech, statement or legislation.*

• You must provide personal perspectives and connections to the chosen policy.
Parts of an application

• A résumé of activities

• Official transcripts

• An on-campus interview for WTAMU endorsement

• And possibly:
  – A portfolio, CD’s, video, etc. (for fine and performing arts)
  – An essay about the scholarship founder
  – Language proficiency evaluations
When you are writing...

• Do your research!
• Use concrete examples to support your assertions.
• Establish a theme and maintain it throughout the application.
• Keep it simple and clear.
• Rewrite, revise, rewrite, revise!
• Ask others to read and comment.
And when all is said and done…

*If you are selected:

– You are off on a great adventure;
– You join an elite group of alumni;
– You raise the bar for future students.
And when all is said and done….

• If you are not selected:
  – You have learned a lot about yourself;
  – You have clarified goals and directions to pursue;
  – You are ready to apply for graduate school or work;
  – You can apply again.
  – Don’t take it personally!
Where do I find more information?

• The Office of Nationally Competitive Scholarships

• [www.wtamu.edu/ncs](http://www.wtamu.edu/ncs)

• [ncs@mail.wtamu.edu](mailto:ncs@mail.wtamu.edu)

• 651-2587

• Killgore Research Center, room 124